

Minutes of the Council of the City of Easton, Pa.

February 25, 2009

Easton, Pa.
Wednesday
February 25, 2009
6:30 P.M.

City Council met in stated session, in Council Chambers, Room 519, Fifth Floor, One South Third Street, to consider any business that may lawfully be brought before the body.

The invocation was given by Mr. Brown, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL

Present: Kenneth Brown
Pamela Panto
Roger Ruggles
Sandra Vulcano
Elinor Warner
Jeffrey Warren
Salvatore J. Panto Jr. (7)

Absent: None (0)

Also in attendance were Thomas A. Hess, City Clerk, William Murphy, City Solicitor, Beth Knickerbocker Assistant City Solicitor, and Glenn Steckman, City Administrator. There were thirty-five other persons present in the audience.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion of Dr. Warner and Mrs. Panto the Agenda was approved by the following vote:

Yeas: Brown, P. Panto, Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner, Warren, S. Panto (7)

Nays: None (0)

ACTION ON MINUTES

The February 11, 2009 Council meeting and Public Hearing minutes were approved as submitted on motion of Dr. Ruggles and Dr. Warner by the following vote:

Yeas: P. Panto, Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner, Warren, S. Panto, Brown (7)

Nays: None (0)

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CERTIFICATE OF COMMENDATION

At this time in the meeting, Mayor Panto presented Mr. James Brehove and Richard Butler, Certificates of Commendation for their work at the Simon Silk Mill Complex.

PRESENTATION OF PROCLAMATION

At this time in the meeting, Mayor Panto presented Robert and Lynn Sedey with a Proclamation for their service to the Historic District Commission.

STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

At this time Mayor Panto presented and read his State of the City address. (See attachment).

PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO BE HEARD (Agenda Items Only)

Michael Krill, 132 Vista Drive, spoke regarding the proposed Resolution for approving a Professional Services Agreement with andropogan. He spoke on his concerns regarding parking in downtown and on Larry Holmes Drive with the proposed Water Front Project.

Mayor Panto spoke regarding the proposed parking on Larry Holmes Drive, and regarding the Bonds with the Parking Authority.

Rich Hieshetter, 304 W. Monroe Street, spoke regarding Landscape Architects for the Water Front Project.

Mayor Panto and Becky Bradley spoke regarding why andropogan was being recommended for approval as the Landscape Architects for Phase I of the Waterfront Front Project.

William Marley, 64 N. 2nd Street, spoke regarding the Water Front Project and suggested a Poet's Garden be made part of the project.

Mayor Panto responded to Mr. Marley statements and suggestions.

REPORTS RECEIVED BY COUNCIL

There were no reports received.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

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Mr. Brown, Chairman of the Finance Committee, spoke regarding legislation that would be before Council, for action, later in the meeting. He also explained that he would be moving to table Bill No. 47 until a later meeting. He reported on a meeting that was held regarding exemptions from payment of Per Capita Taxes, and about the Finance Committee meeting that was held at 4:30 p.m., and related what had been discussed.

Mrs. Vulcano, Chairman of the Economic Development Committee reported that the combined Planning and Economic Development Committee had met on February 24th at 5:00 p.m., and told what had been discussed. She spoke regarding the Greater Easton Development Partnership, the Main Street, and the West Ward Neighborhood Associations. She reported that Main Street's Annual meeting would be held on March 12th in the Acopian Room at the State Theatre.

Mrs. Panto, Chairman of the Planning Committee, spoke regarding legislation that would be before Council later in the meeting, regarding the combined Planning and Economic Development Committee meeting, and related what had been discussed regarding the Hub Cap Store.

Mrs. Panto congratulated Terrance Hand for being the Honoree at the Children's Home Pink Ball and reported that Saturday, January 31st was proclaimed Terrance Hand day in Easton.

Mr. Warren, Chairman of the Public Safety Committee, spoke regarding legislation that would be before Council later in the meeting, regarding the most recent Public Safety Committee meeting and reported what had been discussed regarding parking after snow storms. He also reported that the Web Site Ad Hoc committee had met and related what had been discussed.

Dr. Warner, Chairman of the Public Works Committee, reported that the next Public Works Committee meeting would be held on March 11th at 4:30 p.m. in Council Chambers and related what was scheduled to be discussed.

Dr. Ruggles, Chairman of the Strategic Planning Committee reported that the Strategic Planning progress was moving forward, committee members have been working on their assignments, and reported that the committee's next meeting would be held on March 10th.

William Murphy, City Solicitor reported that Council had met in Executive Session, at 5:15 p.m. and had discussed a Workers Compensation case.

Ms. Knickerbocker furnished Council with an update on the Hub Cap Store litigation.

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Mayor Panto spoke regarding anticipated HUD CDBG funding, the proposed Water Front Project, and regarding the final date that Council could amend salaries for Council members. He also reported that a documentary on the City would be aired on PBS on March 1, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Action on Legislative Bills

Bill No. 46, (Ordinance 5193) Amending Ordinance 5056, Providing Revenues and Appropriating Specific Sums to be required for the Health Benefits Fund during the Fiscal Year 2008, was adopted on motion of Mr. Brown and Mrs. Panto by the following vote:

Yeas: P. Panto, Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner, Warren, S. Panto, Brown (7)

Nays: None (0)

Ordinance 5193 increases revenue and expenditure by \$541,928.02 in the 2008 Health Benefits Fund.

Bill No. 47, An Ordinance of the Council of the City of Easton, Northampton County, Pennsylvania, authorizing and directing issuance of General Obligation Bond, was tabled on motion of Mr. Brown and Mrs. Vulcano by the following vote:

Yeas: Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner, Warren, S. Panto, Brown, P. Panto (7)

Nays: None (0)

This Bill would authorize the issuance of General Obligation Bonds.

CORRESPONDENCE

The following correspondence was received by Council:

(a) Roy White, ESWA; Executive Summaries, City of Easton – 2008 Capital Improvement Expenditures, Metered Water Rate Structure Change, and the City of Easton-2009 Infrastructure Replacement Project.

NEW BUSINESS

Introduction of Legislative Bills:

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An e-mail, dated February 17, 2009, regarding a requested change to Section 560-47, Parking Inoperable or Illegally Registered Vehicles, of the Codified Ordinances was received from Councilman Warner.

Bill No. 48, Amending Section 560-47, Parking Inoperable or Illegally Registered Vehicles, of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Easton, Pa., was introduced by Mr. Warren and ordered processed for adoption.

This Bill would add the words “owner or”, “in control of any vehicle”, “and/or emissions”, and “unless the vehicle is exempt from State emissions inspection” to Section 56047 of the Codified Ordinances.

An e-mail, dated February 18, 2009, regarding a request to approve an appointment to the Two Rivers Council of Governments was received from Mayor Panto.

The next item was a proposed Resolution that would approve an appointment of a person, and an alternate, to the Two Rivers Council of Governments.

The following Resolution was introduced by Mayor Panto:

31-2009

Dr. Warner asked if she was allowed to vote on the above Resolution.

Attorney Murphy said that there was not a conflict of interest and would be allowed to vote.

The above Resolution was adopted on motion of Mayor Panto and Mrs. Vulcano by the following vote:

Yeas: Vulcano, Warner, Warren, S. Panto, Brown, P. Panto, Ruggles (7)

Nays: None (0)

A February 18, 2009 memorandum, regarding a request to approve the purchase of a Special Duty Vehicle, was received from Police Chief Lawrence Palmer.

The next item on the Agenda was a proposed Resolution that would authorize the purchase of a Special Duty Vehicle by the Police Department.

The following Resolution was introduced by Mr. Warren:

32-2009

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The above Resolution was adopted on motion of Mr. Warren and Mr. Panto, by the following vote:

Yeas: Warner, Warren, S. Panto, Brown, P. Panto, Ruggles, Vulcano (7)

Nays: None (0)

The next item on the Agenda was a proposed Resolution that would approve a Professional Services Agreement, with andropogon, for Professional Services related to the City's Waterfront Improvements.

The following Resolution was introduced by Mrs. Panto:

33-2009

Mayor Panto made comments regarding andropogon, Dr. Warner thanked Mr. Hieshetter for his suggestions and information on Landscape Architects that he had previously furnished to Council, and explained why and how she would be voting for this company.

Becky Bradley and David Hopkins explained why and how andropogon had been selected for Phase I of the Waterfront Project.

The above Resolution was adopted on motion of Mrs. Panto and Mrs. Vulcano by the following vote:

Yeas: S. Panto, Brown, P. Panto, Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner Warren (7)

Nays: None (0)

The next item on the Agenda was a proposed Resolution that would authorize the reallocation of \$2,000,000 earmarked from the DRJTBC's Grant for the Riverwalk Project to the City's Waterfront Project.

The following Resolution was introduced by Mrs. Panto:

34-2009

The above Resolution was adopted on motion of Mrs. Panto and Mrs. Vulcano by the following vote:

Yeas: Warren S. Panto, Brown, P. Panto, Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner, (7)

Nays: None (0)

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Yeas: P. Panto, Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner, Warren, S. Panto, Brown (7)

Nays: None (0)

CITIZEN'S RIGHT TO BE HEARD

Michael Krill, 132 Vista Drive, spoke regarding the Parking Authority, the need for a comprehensive study on parking throughout the City, and gave a couple of suggestions on things that could be done to help alleviate the parking problem throughout the City.

Mayor Panto said that a Parking summit had been held and at that summit it was decided that two parking task forces would be established, one to look into parking in the West Ward and one to look at the parking in the downtown section of the City. He invited Mr. Krill to become a member of one of the Task Forces.

Terrance Hand, 623 Chestnut Terrace, gave Council a brief update on what was happening at the Housing Authority's meetings, lack of information coming from the Authority to the City, commended the Mayor on his State of the City Address, spoke regarding the National Stimulus Package, and regarding the need for a bigger and better Parking Authority with more responsibilities.

Mayor Panto and Dr. Warner responded to Mr. Hand's comments concerning the Parking Authority and the Stimulus Program.

Richard Hieshetter, 304 W. Monroe Street, spoke regarding the need for grants for transportation centers which include rail service.

Mayor Panto made responded to Mr. Hieshetter's comments.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:07 p.m. on motion of Dr. Ruggles and Mrs. Vulcano and Mr. Warren by the following vote:

Yeas: Brown, P. Panto, Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner, Warren, S. Panto (7)

Nays: None (0)

Thomas A. Hess, City Clerk